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ABSTRACT

Subjective (perceived) personality differences between blacks and whites were investigated in eleven personality dimensions. Subjects were forty black male and forty white male students from the ninth to twelfth grades. Subjects were assigned to one of two racial conditions corresponding to the subjects' own race; subjects were then randomly assigned under each racial group to one of four instruction conditions (Self Description, Peer Description, Heterorace Description, Projected Autorace Description). Analyses of variance revealed an instruction effect in the absence of a strong race effect. Race by instruction interactions were observed. Correlational analyses were also performed. Findings indicated that black and white self description were very similar. Blacks did not perceive whites as very different while whites perceived blacks as somewhat different from themselves. (Author)

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THE MEASUREMENT OF BLACK-WHITE ADOLESCENT PERCEPTIONS THROUGH THE USE OF VARIED INSTRUCTIONS[1]

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Over the years, research on black-white racial perceptions has included many different paradigms and measures. The measures have ranged from the use of social distance scales (Fagan & O'Neill, 1965; Gray & Thompson, 1953; Noel & Pinkney, 1963; Proenza & Strickland, 1965; Triandis & Triandis, 1960), interview type procedures (Bayton, McAlister & Hamer, 1956; Byrne & Andres, 1964; Freedman, 1965; Hunt, 1959; McDaniel & Babchuk, 1960; Williams, 1964), projective instruments (Dennis, 1968; Long & Hendersen, 1968; Mussen, 1953), attitude scales (Athey, Coleman, Reitman & Tang, 1960; Bird, Monachesi & Burdick, 1952; Killian & Grigg, 1960; Mayo & Kinzer, 1950; Turman & Holtzman, 1955), photograph ratings (Byrne & McGraw, 1964; Malpas & Kravitz, 1969; Secord, Bevan & Katz, 1956) to the use of psychological questionnaires (Bayton, Austin & Burke, 1965; Bayton & Muldrow, 1968; Butcher, Ball & Ray, 1964; Butts, 1963; Grossack, 1957).

It is the last area, the use of psychological questionnaires, specifically personality inventories, to investigate black-white racial descriptions that was under consideration in the present investigation.

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Grossack (1957), using the EPPS, found that Negro females showed significantly higher scores on achievement than white females. Also, Negro college students scored significantly higher on the order scale than did whites. The general implication was that, in 1957, southern Negro students were not significantly different than students in general.

Using the California Test of Personality subtest of "sense of personal worth" it was found that black children with an impairment of their self esteem, perceived themselves less accurately in terms of skin color than did the black children with less self esteem impairment (Butts, 1963). In an investigation employing the MMPI with both black and white students divided into socioeconomic classes, Butcher, Ball and Ray's (1964) results indicated that subcultural differences did exist, but they were independent of sex and socioeconomic level.

Bayton, Austin and Burke (1965), using the Guilford-Zimmerman Temperament Survey, demonstrated that black subjects differentiated in the perception of personality characteristics among both their own group and racial majority groups. Several years later, employing the same measure, it was found that blacks saw dark skinned Negroes as possessing the most desirable amounts of objectivity, friendliness and personal relations as compared to light skinned Negroes. The implication was that blacks do differentiate from each other on the basis of personality variables (Bayton & Muldrow, 1968).

The preceding articles are fairly representative of this area of research and indicate that a number of studies have directed

themselves to the perceptual notions of blacks and whites regarding personality. However, no studies have done this specifically with adolescents, both whites and blacks in the same investigation using a person perception paradigm in which each race is both judge and other, and, too, using a reliable personality questionnaire as the dependent measure. The present study is an attempt to contribute to our understanding in the area of race-related perceptions, specifically among adolescents.

METHOD

Design

The objective of the present investigation was to assess race-related perceptions among adolescents within the structure of a comprehensive personality framework. The study of this area was accomplished by assigning individual groups of adolescent subjects to one of two racial conditions, black or white, with the assignment corresponding to the subjects' own race. Then, subjects were further differentiated under each racial condition as to whether they were asked to report self perceptions, peer perceptions, heterorace perceptions or projected autorace perceptions. Thus the study called for a 2 (Race: Black, White) by 4 (Instruction: Self Description, Peer Description, Heterorace Description, Projected Autorace Description) design with independent measurements across all conditions.

Subjects

A total of eighty adolescent subjects were employed in the present investigation. Subjects were forty black male and forty white male students from the ninth to twelfth grades of the Uniontown School District (Fayette County, Pennsylvania) who were

selected at random from the school roster. Only students from regular classrooms were included. Every student was given the opportunity to withdraw his name from the school's master list before random selection began (no student requested to have his name withdrawn). Subjects were then divided into four random groups for both races: (1) Self Description (SD), (2) Peer Description (PD), (3) Heterorace Description (HR), (4) Projected Autorace Description (PA). The total sample was eighty (ten in each instruction condition for both races).

Measurement Variables

Measurement variables were selected from the personality domain. It was decided to use subtests from a well established measurement instrument as dependent variables. Eleven personality dimensions were chosen from Jackson's (1967) Personality Research Form A (PRF). The eleven personality scales selected were: Achievement, Affiliation, Aggression, Autonomy, Dominance, Exhibition, Harmavoidance, Impulsivity, Play, Social Recognition and Understanding.

For each personality scale and the one validity scale all twenty items from Form A were selected. The resulting 240 items were arranged in a booklet in the same order in which they appear in the original test form.

Procedure

Subjects were tested in groups. Within any given testing session, only subjects of the same race and of the same instructional set were present. In addition, attempting to reduce racial experimenter bias effects, the experimenter present during testing was the same race as the subjects being tested. All subjects were

administered the 240 item booklet involving a validity scale and eleven personality dimensions. Subjects were provided fifty minutes to complete the test (all Ss finished the task).

In a short general introduction prior to testing, subjects were informed that the aim of the study was to find out how people saw themselves and others in terms of personality description. Subsequently, instructions were varied according to the different experimental conditions.

With regard to the experimental conditions, standard instructions were given to the Self Description (SD) group. The Peer Description (PD) group was instructed to "imagine that you are the average high school student. Answer the following items as you think the average high school student would answer them." In the Heterorace Description (HR) group, subjects were asked to imagine themselves to be the average high school student of the other race and then answer the items as they thought that member of the other race would answer them. Lastly, in the Projected Autorace Description (PA) group, subjects were asked to imagine themselves to be the average high school student of the other race looking at the average high school student of the subjects' own race, and then answer the items as they thought that member of the other race would describe the member of the subjects' own race. The instructions were printed on the front page of the booklet and were also printed twice in the text of the booklet to serve as reminders of the testing conditions. Practice items from an alternate form were also provided before the testing began to ensure that the subjects understood what they were to be doing.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was aimed at examining differences associated

with main and interaction effects by analyses of variance. Separate analyses of variance were computed on the summed raw scores for each of the eleven behavioral dimensions across all eighty subjects. Main and interaction effects were tested using a 2 (race) by 4 (instruction) analysis of variance design under the assumption of a fixed effects model (Winer, 1971). The level of significance in testing for main and interaction effects was set at .05. Where interactions were obtained, a data breakdown was further made into simple main effects as proposed by Winer (1971). For all obtained significant effects the Newman-Keuls procedure for differences between group means was performed.

Also, in order to assess the degree of profile similarity between race and instruction combinations, the comparison of mean profiles was undertaken employing the profile similarity coefficient r_c (Cohen, 1969).

RESULTS

A comprehensive summary of the F-values for the eleven analyses of variance is presented in Table 1. Six of the eleven

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Insert Table 1 about here

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behavioral dimensions attained significance: Achievement, Aggression, Exhibition, Impulsivity, Social Recognition and Understanding.

Race Effects

Analysis of Variance: The main effect of Race was observed for only one scale, Understanding ($F_{(1,72)} = 4.51$, $p < .05$). In the presence of this finding, for the scale of Understanding, there

was also a Race by Instruction interaction ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.43, p <.01). The effect of Race for this dimension was attributed to the generally higher scores by black subjects in their descriptions for the varied instruction conditions; a posteriori comparisons substantiated this conclusion in part ($\bar{X}_{HR}$= 9.8 for blacks, $\bar{X}_{HR}$= 5.1 for whites, p <.01) for the heterorace (HR) instruction condition (See Table 2).

Insert Table 2 about here

Correlations: The general absence of Race main effects was further reflected in the profile similarity coefficient, which indicated that the correlation between the races across the instruction conditions was very high (.98).

Instruction Effects

Analysis of Variance: The main effect of Instruction was observed for the following five scales: Achievement ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.18, p <.01), Aggression ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.50, p <.01), Exhibition ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.11, p <.01), Impulsivity ($F_{(3,72)}$= 3.51, p <.05) and Understanding ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.14, p <.01). However, only for the scales of Exhibition and Impulsivity did an Instruction effect occur independent of a Race by Instruction interaction. For these two personality dimensions there was a tendency for the self description (SD) scores to be lower than the scores for the other three conditions. In other words, the trend was for subjects to view themselves as less exhibitionistic and impulsive than (1) their peers (PD), (2) the other race (HR), and (3) the way they thought the other race would view one's own (PA). A post hoc comparison confirmed this

trend in part for the scale of Exhibition between the self description and heterorace instruction conditions ($\bar{X}_{SD}$= 9.6, $\bar{X}_{HR}$= 14.2, $p < .01$).

For the remaining scales of Achievement, Aggression and Understanding, the Instruction effect was confounded by the interaction effect, but the tendency again was for subjects in the self description condition to have seen themselves as different from the other three target groups. Moreover, the trend existed for subjects to view themselves as more achievement minded, intellectual and less aggressive than (1) their peers, (2) the other race, and (3) the way they thought the other race would view one's own.

Correlations: In the profile similarity analysis, the effect of the various instruction conditions was again seen. The correlational analysis revealed that the self description condition correlated only moderately with the peer instruction (.58), the heterorace instruction (.41) and the projected autorace instruction conditions (.51).

Race by Instruction Interactions

Analysis of Variance: A Race by Instruction interaction was observed for the following four scales: Achievement ($F_{(3,72)}$= 7.08, $p < .01$), Aggression ($F_{(3,72)}$= 2.81, $p < .05$), Social Recognition ($F_{(3,72)}$= 5.66, $p < .01$) and Understanding ($F_{(3,72)}$= 6.43, $p < .01$). Only one, Social Recognition, occurred independent of a main effect. In this instance, black subjects perceived whites as significantly more approval-seeking than themselves ($\bar{X}_{BSD}$= 10.7, $\bar{X}_{BHR}$= 14.3, $p < .05$). Also, white subjects felt their peers were

considerably more proper than were blacks ($\bar{X}_{WPD}$= 14.6, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 10.1, $p < .01$). In terms of differences between white and black subjects, white Ss described their peers as significantly higher in recognition-seeking than did black Ss ($\bar{X}_{WPD}$= 14.6, $\bar{X}_{BPD}$= 11.9, $p < .05$), and black subjects described whites as significantly higher in approval-seeking than white Ss described blacks ($\bar{X}_{BHR}$= 14.3, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 10.1, $p < .01$; see Table 2).

The interaction effect for the scales of Achievement, Aggression and Understanding largely result from the finding that black Ss did not differentiate themselves from peers or the other race as much as white Ss did. Rather, looking at Table 2, it can be seen that white subjects felt they were significantly more achievement oriented than either their peers ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 12.6, $\bar{X}_{WPD}$=6.9, $p < .01$) or the other race ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 12.6, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 5.4, $p < .01$). Also, white Ss felt they were significantly more intellectual and understanding than were their peers ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 11.1, $\bar{X}_{WPD}$= 7.5, $p < .05$) or the other race ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 11.1, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 5.1, $p < .01$). Lastly, white subjects felt they were significantly less aggressive than their peers ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 7.8, $\bar{X}_{WPD}$=12.6, $p < .01$) and the other race ($\bar{X}_{WSD}$= 7.8, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 14.1, $p < .01$). On the other hand, black subjects did not perceive much difference between themselves, their peers or the other race on any of those dimensions.

Correlations: The interaction effect was further mirrored in the profile similarity coefficients found in Table 3, which indicated

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Insert Table 3 about here

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that the correlation between black self description (BSD) and black peer description (BPD) was higher (.94) than the correlation between white self description (WSD) and white peer description (WPD) which was .62. Also, the correlation between black self description (BSD) and black heterorace description (BHR) was higher (.69) than the correlation (.39) between white self description (WSD) and white heterorace description (WHR). All of these data indicated that there were differential results dependent upon the race and instruction in effect.

DISCUSSION

In taking a closer look at the findings, several interesting things are revealed. When the data is examined across traits for the various instruction conditions, it is found that for the self description condition, blacks and whites responded similarly across all eleven of the personality scales. For the black and white students in this investigation, there were no significant differences when describing themselves. This finding is further supported by the profile similarity coefficient (.89) calculated for white self description (WSD) and black self description (BSD) found in Table 3.

For the peer description condition, black Ss and white Ss responded similarly on all but two of the traits, Achievement and Social Recognition. Here blacks described their peers as significantly more achieving than did the whites ($\bar{X}_{BPD} = 10.7$, $\bar{X}_{WPD} = 6.9$, $p < .05$). For the scale of Social Recognition, white Ss described their peers as significantly more approval-seeking than did the

blacks ($\bar{X}_{WPD}$= 14.6, $\bar{X}_{BPD}$= 11.9, $p < .05$; see Table 2). This general response similarity between the races for the peer instruction condition is supported by the profile similarity coefficient (.83) between the overall white peer description (WPD) and black peer description (BPD) as found in Table 3.

In the heterorace instruction condition, the races generally responded similarly with differences being found on three scales: Achievement, Social Recognition and Understanding. Examining Table 2 further, it can be seen that the black Ss described whites as significantly more achievement minded than when the white Ss described blacks ($\bar{X}_{BHR}$= 9.2, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 5.4, $p < .05$). Also, black Ss felt that whites were significantly more approval-seeking than the white Ss felt in their description of blacks ($\bar{X}_{BHR}$= 14.3, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 10.1, $p < .01$). Lastly, the black Ss described whites as significantly more intellectual and understanding than in the case of the white Ss' description of blacks ($\bar{X}_{BHR}$= 9.8, $\bar{X}_{WHR}$= 5.1, $p < .01$). This overall tendency in response similarity within the heterorace instruction condition was reflected in the profile similarity coefficient (.82) between black (BHR) and white (WHR) heterorace description as seen in Table 3.

For the last instruction, the projected autorace description, the response similarity was not very marked. In this case, there were significant differences found for two of the scales: Achievement and Understanding. For both these scales, as presented in Table 2, white Ss were significantly higher in their projected autorace description than were the blacks (Ach: $\bar{X}_{WPA}$= 11.0,

$\bar{X}_{BPA}$= 5.5, p <.01; Und: $\bar{X}_{WPA}$= 10.7, $\bar{X}_{BPA}$= 7.1, p <.05). Although there were only two scales that statistically differed in the projected autorace description, the combined differences were such that the correlation between white (WPA) and black (BPA) projected autorace conditions reflected considerably less similarity (.67) than the three previous instruction conditions (See Table 3).

As mentioned previously in the presentation of race effects, and as just presented in the discussion of the various instruction conditions, the subjects, both blacks and whites, responded quite similarly across traits. As cited earlier, when instructions were statistically collapsed, the profile similarity coefficient reflected a very high degree of correspondence (.98) between the races.

In studying the data another way, by examining the instruction conditions within race using the profile analysis, more interesting findings resulted. When self description (SD) and peer description (PD) conditions were compared, it was felt that an informal measure of "self-peer homogeneity" would be obtained. Further, the higher the correlations between responses to these two instructions, the less perceived difference between self and peer; rather, if the correlation were high, there would be perceived similarity, or relative homogeneity between self and peer. The results of the profile similarity analysis as presented in Table 3, revealed that the correlation between black self description (BSD) and black peer description (BPD) was quite high (.94) while for white subjects, the parallel comparison (WSD-WPD) yielded a correlation (.62) of only moderate size. This finding would suggest that blacks, in

their descriptions of themselves and their peers, were considerably more homogeneous than were the white subjects in their self-peer descriptions. This is a very interesting finding but one that requires considerably more study for proper elucidation.

Examining the results still another way, by looking at the self and heterorace conditions across race using the profile similarity analysis, another intriguing result was found. For instance, the profile correlation between the self description (SD) of one race and the heterorace description (HR) of the other race can be looked at as an informal measure of accuracy (SD serving in this instance as criterion) of "other race" description. From Table 3, it can be seen that the correlation between white self description (WSD) and black heterorace description (BHR) was .63, while the correlation between black self description (BSD) and white heterorace description (WHR) was only .40. This finding then suggests that black subjects were more accurate in their overall description of whites than were white subjects in their overall description of blacks. This, too, is a very interesting finding, which, if verified by subsequent investigations, would have broad societal implications.

Pursuing this approach further, an examination of the profile similarity between the self description and heterorace description within race would yield a perceived similarity measure. Further, if the correlation between self and heterorace responses yielded a high correlation within a given race, this suggests that that particular race did not perceive themselves as being very different from the other race. As presented in Table 3, the profile simi-

larity coefficient between black self description (BSD) and black heterorace description (BHR) was .69, which indicated a moderate degree of correspondence, while the correlation between white self description (WSD) and white heterorace description (WHR) was the lowest correlation (.39) in the entire matrix and indicated a low degree of correspondence.

The preceding discussion suggested that blacks felt whites were not terribly different from themselves, while the white subjects did feel that blacks were quite different. This, again, is an important finding, and one that requires further study; if subsequent investigations were to validate this finding with different samples and through the use of various design procedures and analyses, it would have a profound effect on our understanding of racial strife, and, furthermore, it would highlight the quality, intensity and source of the impediments to accurate racial perception and racial harmony.

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TABLE 1

Summary of F-Values

Dimension	Source		
	Race (R) F	Instruction (I) F	R x I F
Achievement	.11	6.18**	7.08**
Affiliation	.44	1.67	1.45
Aggression	.67	6.50**	2.81*
Autonomy	.16	1.42	1.48
Dominance	.16	1.71	.21
Exhibition	1.35	6.11**	1.37
Harmavoidance	.42	.18	2.40
Impulsivity	3.44	3.51*	1.03
Play	.00	2.72	1.36
Social Recognition	.12	1.73	5.66**
Understanding	4.51*	6.14**	6.43**

*p <.05
**p <.01

TABLE 2

Mean Raw Scores for Significant Scales

Race	Instruction SD Mean	PD Mean	HR Mean	PA Mean
		Achievement		
BL	11.6	10.7	9.2	5.5
WH	12.6	6.9	5.4	11.0
		Aggression		
BL	10.5	9.8	14.0	13.4
WH	7.8	12.6	14.1	10.6
		Exhibition		
BL	10.1	11.0	12.9	13.0
WH	9.1	13.4	15.4	12.7
		Impulsivity		
BL	9.3	9.9	12.4	11.4
WH	9.8	13.5	13.4	11.8
		Social Recognition		
BL	10.7	11.9	14.3	11.4
WH	11.7	14.6	10.1	12.8
		Understanding		
BL	12.5	11.2	9.8	7.1
WH	11.1	7.5	5.1	10.7

Note.—All cell means based on n = 10.

TABLE 3

Profile Similarity Coefficients
for Instruction by Race

Instruction by Race	Instruction by Race							
	BSD	BPD	BHR	BPA	WSD	WPD	WHR	WPA
BSD	---	.94	.69	.42	.89	.64	.40	.87
BPD		---	.82	.62	.92	.83	.61	.68
BHR			---	.84	.63	.95	.82	.89
BPA				---	.39	.90	.98	.67
WSD					---	.62	.39	.84
WPD						---	.89	.87
WHR							---	.70
WPA								---

Note.____ BSD = Black Self Description; BPD = Black Peer Description; BHR = Black Heterorace Description; BPA = Black Projected Autorace Description; WSD = White Self Description; WPD = White Peer Description; WHR = White Heterorace Description; WPA = White Projected Autorace Description.